



India Attended OIC Summit

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Recently, India's External Affairs minister (EAM) attended **46th Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)** held in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates (UAE).

- India was invited by the host UAE as the "Guest of Honour" to attend the inaugural session of the OIC.
- Even though Pakistan is a founding member of OIC. It absented itself during the session.
- **2019 is the 50th anniversary of OIC.**

India's address at OIC

- At the summit, EAM has said that the fight is against terrorism and not a confrontation with any religion.
- Without naming Pakistan, EAM said countries that provided shelter and funding to terrorists must be asked to dismantle the infrastructure of terrorist camps and stop providing funding and shelter to terror organizations based in their countries.
- EAM also said that India is home to more than 185 million Muslims and they practice their respective beliefs and live in harmony with each other and with their non-Muslim brethren.

Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)

- The OIC was formed in 1969 after a summit in Rabat, the Kingdom of Morocco on 25 September 1969 following the fire in Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem.
- The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) is among the largest inter-governmental organizations in the world.

The term **intergovernmental organization (IGO)** refers to an entity created by treaty, involving two or more nations, to work in good faith, on issues of common interest. In the absence of a treaty, an IGO does not exist in the legal sense.

- It has 57 member states and 12 observers including the United Nations.
- The Organization is the collective voice of the Muslim world. It endeavors to safeguard and protect the interests of the Muslim world in the spirit of promoting international peace and harmony among various people of the world.
- The OIC members constitute more than one-fourth of the members of the United Nations, and nearly a quarter of humanity. It is an organization, that has a key role in shaping our world.

Significance of Invitation

- The invitation to address the OIC can be seen as a **major diplomatic victory as this is the first time that an Indian EAM was invited.**
- This can be seen as a part of **India's efforts to isolate Pakistan diplomatically.**
- In 1969, the invite to then union minister Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed was withdrawn at Pakistan's insistence.
- The official announcement by the UAE mentioned, that the invitation to India was extended in recognition of India's global political stature as well as its time-honored and deep-rooted cultural and historical legacy and its important Islamic component.

Critical analysis of India attending OIC

- India is a secular country, regardless of all the religions here, **India does not prefer religion above nationality.** Thus, the government must carefully consider its engagement with OIC.
- The major basis of the OIC is of the **Muslim Brotherhood and that Muslims everywhere can be clubbed together because of their faith. But, India does not support such a philosophy of a collective identity based on religion.** Thus, if India decides to engage with OIC it should be on the basis of our national interest not on account of religion.
- There are issues with respect to **OIC's stands on Kashmir in past.** Recently, the **OIC has condemned Indian Airforce strikes in Pakistan.**

OIC stand on Kashmir

The 45th session had a very strong statement on Kashmir which "condemned" India and supported third-party intervention and self-determination. The statement also called the killing of terrorist Burhan Wani as "extra-judicial" and called the elections in Kashmir "farcical".

- In past decades, **India had to spend lots of diplomatic capital to counter OIC's stands at many international organizations.** By attending it, we are validating the same organization.

Diplomatic capital refers to the trust, goodwill, and influence which a diplomat, or a state represented by its diplomats, has within international diplomacy.

More about India and OIC